

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TANANA 00232 052045Z

62

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NASA-01 OES-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

AID-05 OMB-01 EB-07 CU-02 (ISO) W
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O P 051945Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6920

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS PRIORIY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG PRIORITY

COMIDEASTFOR PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0232

DEPT PASS DIA

CINCLANT AND CINCUSNAVEUR FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PINS MA

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF NEW MALAGASY GOVERNMENT

REF: TANANARIVE 0231 AND 0233

BEGIN SUMMARY: NEW MALAGASY GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE AT LEAST
AS GOOD FOR US INTERESTS AS OUTGOING GOVERNMENT, AND
POSSIBLY SOMEWHAT BETTER. WITH SEVERAL US FRIENDS IN
KEY SPOTS, NO NEW PROBLEMS SHOULD ARISE IN NASA STATION
NEGOTIATIONS. NEW FOREIGN MINISTER IS, HOWEVER, ESSENTIALLY
UNKNOWN QUANTITY POLITICALLY, AND WE SHALL HAVE TO SEE
WHETHER NEW GOVERNMENT ANY MORE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 TANANA 00232 052045Z

NAVAL SHIP VISITS AND US POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZA-

TIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. WE BELIEVE THAT NEW GOVERNMENT OF COLONEL RATSIMANDRAVA SHOULD BE AT LEAST AS GOOD FOR US INTERESTS AS OUTGOING RAMANANTSOA GOVERNMENT, AND POSSIBLY SOMEWHAT BETTER. WHILE RATSIMANDRAVA HAD DISPLAYED STRONGLY NATIONALISTIC AND EVEN SOME XENOPHOBIC SIGNS AS MINISTER OF INTERIOR, HE HAS BEEN FRIENDLY AND COURTEOUS WITH EMBASSY. HE WAS PLEASED WHEN WE EXTENDED HIM INVITATION LAST AUGUST TO VISIT US UNDER CU ASUPICES, BUT THIS POSSIBILITY OBVIOUSLY OUT NOW.

2. WE PLEASED THAT PROVEN FRIEND OF US, GENERAL ANDRIAMHAZO, WILL SERVE AS MINISTER OF STATE WITHOUT PORTFOLIO. PRESUMABLY IN THIS CAPACITY HE WILL BE CONVILTED BY RATSIMANDRAVA ON BROAD RANGE OF QUESTIONS, AND WE BELIEVE CAN BE COUNTED ON TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO US.

3. WE EQUALLY PLEASED THAT ANOTHER FRIEND OF US, LT COLONEL RAKOTOMALALA, WILL SERVE AS MINISTER OF POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS. WITH HIM AND ANDRIAMHAZO IN NEW POSITIONS, WE WOULD NOT ANTICIPATE THAT INCOMING GOVERNMENT WILL CREATE NEW PROBLEMS IN NASA STATION NEGOTIATIONS.

4. NEW FOREIGN MINISTER ZAKARIASY IS NOT PERSONALLY KNOWN TO AMERICAN STAFF OF EMBASSY. THOUGH HEAD OF THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OPERATED BY PROTESTANT FEDERATION FROM WHICH IS PARTLY CONTROLLED BY PRO-SOVIET AKFM PARTY, WE UNDERSTAND THAT ZAKARIASY IS NOT HIMSELF MEMBER OF AKFM, AND HAS SOUGHT MAINTAIN POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE OF SEMINARY. HIS FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS WILL EMERGE ONLY AS CONTACT IS ESTABLISHED.

5. WHILE IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT RATSIRAKA, WHICH AS FOREIGN MINISTER IN PRECEDING GOVERNMENT LED MADAGASCAR INTO RADICAL NONALIGNED CAMP AND STRONGLY OPPOSED FOREIGN NAVAL SHIP VISITS, IS OUT OF NEW GOVERNMENT, THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY PRESAGE CHANGE IN THESE RESPECTS. RATSIMANDRAVA HAS PUBLICLY STATED HE WILL CONTINUE
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PAGE 03 TANANA 00232 052045Z

OMNIDIRECTIONAL FOREIGN POLICY OF PRECEDING GOVERNMENT, AND RATSIRAKA IS PROBABLY OUT BECAUSE HE AND RATSIMANDRAVA ARE NOT VERY COMPATIBLE PERSONALLY.

6. RATSIMANDRAVA'S DISTRUST OF AND ATTACKS ON LARGE FOREIGN FIRMS, WHILE SEEMINGLY DIRECTED THUS FAR AT FRENCH FIRMS, MAY MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR AMERICAN AND OTHER FOREIGN OIL MARKETING COMPANIES TO ARRIVE AT SATISFACTORY SOLUTION

OF THEIR DIFFICULTIES WITH GOMR OVER REPATRIATION OF
FOREIGN EXCHANGE FROM EXPORTS.

7. ACCORDING TENTATIVE INFORMATION WHICH HAS REACHED
EMBASSY, TWO OF NEW MINISTERS MAY BE CHARACTERIZED AS
LEFTISTS: MAJOR ANDRIAMAHOLISON, MINISTER OF
INFORMATION, AND MAJOR REVELOSON, MINISTER OF PUBLIC
WORKS AND BROTHER-IN-LAW OF RATSIRAKA. WE PREFER TO
AWAIT DEVELOPMENTS BEFORE REACHING DEFINITIVE CONCLUSION
ABOUT THEM.

8. NO INFORMATION IS YET AVAILABLE ON STATUS OF
COLONEL BRECHARD RAJAONARISON AND OTHER COTIER OFFICERS
WHO TOOK REFUGE IN ARMED POLICE CAMP BECAUSE OF CHARGES
RELATED TO COP ATTEMPT ON DECEMBER 31. OVERWHELMING
PROPORTION OF COTIER MINISTERS IN NEW GOVERNMENT MEETS,
HOWEVER, ONE OF HIS CHIEF DEMANDS.

9. GENERAL RAMANANTSOA WILL PRESUMABLY RETIRE, PERHAPS
TO HIS PROPERTY IN FRANCE. THERE IS NO PUBLIC
INDICATION AS YET OF FUTURE POSITION OF HIS RIGHT-HAND
MAN, COLONEL ROLAND RABETAFIKA. HE APPEARS HAVE LOST
OUT COMPLETELY IN HIS CONFLICT WITH RATSIMANDRAVA.

10. UNLESS DEPARTMENT OBJECTS, I PLAN SEND PERSONAL
LETTER OF CONGRATULATIONS TO RATSIMANDRAVA ON FEB 6.
SHALL ALSO TRANSMIT RECOMMENDATION THAT DATE TO
DEPT WITH RESPECT TO CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT
FORD.
MENDENHALL

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